

SCHULTZ FIRE – Waterline Road Hazard Assessment

14 July 2010

Numerous hazards exist and, if left unabated, are of grave concern for City employees who travel the road and work the pipeline. In addition to those hazards depicted below, open fire is still present in places, concentrated mostly at the higher elevations of the fire boundary. ***This fire will continue to move-around- perhaps until winter storms finally extinguish the fire: personnel traveling or working on the road or pipeline are in an active fire area, and should plan, dress, and act accordingly. Those fueling or maintaining the pump stations in the Inner Basin should avoid using the Pipeline Road, and instead use the Lockett Meadow alternative route.***



Rocks rolling onto the road are now common. Not all are this large – many are fist sized – but larger ones than this are upslope and unstable. Even the small ones will injure or kill – the larger ones will damage equipment or vehicles. Rock fall can be expected to increase in the coming months, and will not stabilize for upwards of three years. ***Vehicles should not stop or park below rock outcroppings; Driving should be done in teams of two, so that one may continually look upslope to watch for rolling/falling rocks.***



In places, the roadbed was built with log supports. These have burned, and erosion is already evident. ***Immediate replacement and stabilization is warranted.***



Numerous very steep and totally burned-out drainages cross the road, ***each a high volume, life-threatening avenue for debris and muck*** resulting from a heavy downpour settling over the area. Not all are being “armored” (rocked) during the Rehab work currently underway. The total lack of vegetative matter will accelerate the highly erosive nature of the soils, resulting in catastrophic flows.



Not all drainages are as steep as those depicted on the left, but all have significant severely burned areas uphill. ***Vehicles should not stop where the road crosses a drainage, and those working/traveling on the road need to be especially alert to any thunderstorm activity in the area. Should storms threaten or flows develop, individuals must immediately move to those locations where the road crosses a ridgeline and wait-out the event.***

But by far, the most prevalent hazard along the road are the burned-out, root-damaged trees. Consisting of aspen, fir, and pine, many are of significant size.



We estimate from 1,500 to 3,000 of these hazard trees exist within one-tree length of the nine miles (\pm) of severely burned area the road traverses: all demand attention. (Note: This total is not all the fire damaged trees along the road within one tree-length - only the number that require removal.) Because of the size, condition, and location, skilled fire personnel are the only ones who should even be considered to do this work.

Duration: Two months (45 work days): 4 Saw Teams @ 15 trees/day each

Crew: FFD Saw Detail ("C" Certified fallers + Swampers)

Cost *Estimate*: \$155,000

Begin: As soon as possible



The threat is real . . .



The area vast . . .



But even a scant two weeks after the event itself, LIFE does come back. The area will recover, but will take generations before it (and we) regains what was lost.